

Riding the MONOPOLY

BY NATHAN
KROPP



TRANSLATING
KROPP

TYPESETTING
KROPP

CLIPPING & CO.
LAW &
NOTARIAL
FUND
CLEANLINESS

Riding the Monorail

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Nishioka
西 Kyodai
岡 兄妹

I TOOK
A WALK
AROUND
THE
NEIGH-
BORHOOD
AND SORT
OF LOST
MY WAY.

ONE
AFTER-
NOON
WHILE
PITCHING
WORK,

BUT I
DIDN'T
KNOW
WHICH
ROAD
TO TAKE
OR WHAT
TO DO

I KNEW
ROUGHLY
WHERE
I WAS,

TO
GET
BACK
HOME.

WELL, IF I
JUST KEEP
WALKING, I'LL
COME UPON
FAMILIAR
SCENERY
SOON
ENOUGH, I
THOUGHT,
BUT WAS
SOON AT MY
WITS' END
AS I WAN-
DERED.

I COULD
JUST ASK
SOMEONE
FOR DI-
RECTIONS,
BUT IT
FELT A BIT
ODD FOR
A LOCAL
TO ASK
"WHERE
AM I?"



I
THOUGHT
IDLY.

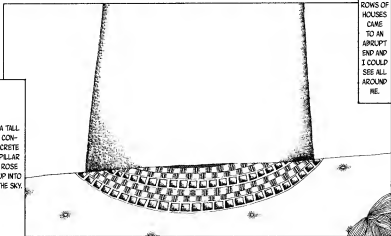
DESPITE
ALL MY
YEARS OF
LIVING HERE,
I DON'T
REALLY
KNOW
ANYTHING
EXCEPT THE
ROUTE
BETWEEN
HOME AND
THE TRAIN
STATION.



THERE
WERE AN
AWFUL
LOT OF
HILLS.



I BEGAN
TO FEEL
OUT OF
BREATH.



A TALL
CON-
CRETE
PILLAR
ROSE
UP INTO
THE SKY.

THE
ROWS OF
HOUSES
CAME
TO AN
ABRUPT
END AND
I COULD
SEE ALL
AROUND
ME.



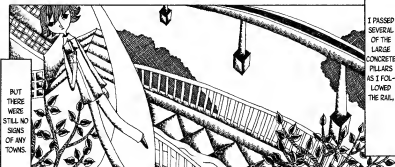
IT WAS A MONORAIL.

I RE-
MEMBERED
THERE USED
TO BE A
MONORAIL
THAT SERVED
A NOW LONG
ABANDONED
AMUSEMENT
PARK.



I'VE
REALLY
COME A
LONG
WAY, I
THOUGHT,
BUT IF
I JUST
FOLLOW
THE MONO-
RAIL, I
SHOULD
EVENTUALLY
REACH
THE TRAIN
STATION.

AND SO,
PULLING
MYSELF
TOGETHER,
I BEGAN
TO WALK
AGAIN.



BUT
THERE
WERE
STILL NO
SIGNS
OF ANY
TOWNS.

I PASSED
SEVERAL
OF THE
LARGE
CONCRETE
PILLARS
AS I FOL-
LOWED
THE RAIL.

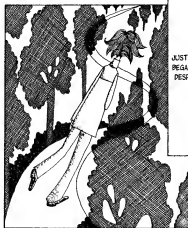


I COULD
NO
LONGER
SEE THE
RAIL
THROUGH
THE THICK
FOREST.

INSTEAD,
I HAD
WANDERED
ONTO A
NARROW
MOUNTAIN
PATH.

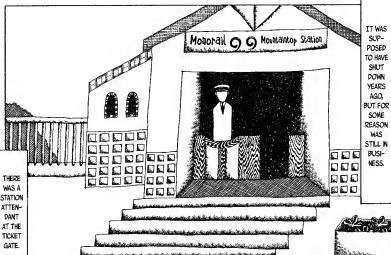


REALI-
ZING
I WAS
TRULY
LOST.



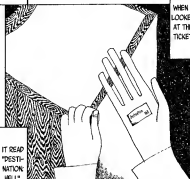
JUST AS I
BEGAN TO
DESPAIR,

I SPOTTED
A STATION.



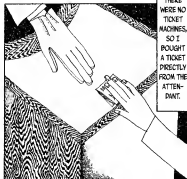
THERE
WAS A
STATION
ATTEND-
DANT
AT THE
TICKET
GATE.

IT WAS
SUP-
POSED
TO HAVE
SHUT
DOWN
YEARS
AGO,
BUT FOR
SOME
REASON
WAS
STILL IN
BUSI-
NESS.



WHEN I
LOOKED
AT THE
TICKET,

IT READ
"DESTI-
NATION:
HELL".



THERE
WERE NO
TICKET
MACHINES,
SO I
BOUGHT
A TICKET
DIRECTLY
FROM THE
ATTEN-
DANT.



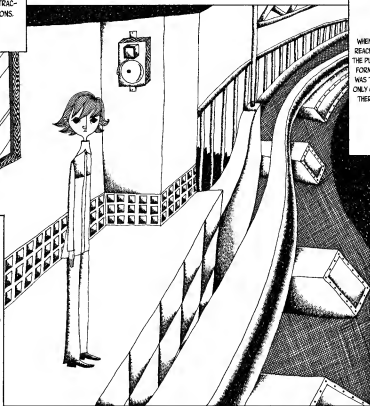
IT SEEMED
ODDLY
PLAUSIBLE.
THE MONO-
RAIL LED
TO AN
AMUSEMENT
PARK, SO
IT MUST
BE ONE
OF THE
ATTRAC-
TIONS.



I MUST
HAVE
LOOKED
SHOCKED,
FOR THE
ATTEND-
ANT
LAUGHED
AND SAID:
"IT'S
JUST A
JONE."

WHEN I
REACHED
THE PLAT-
FORM, I
WAS THE
ONLY ONE
THERE.

I WAITED
IDLY FOR
THE CAR TO
ARRIVE.



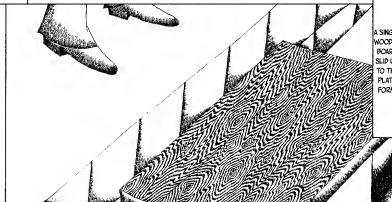


WAS PART
OF THE
"JOKER",

JUST
WHEN I
BEGAN TO
WORRY
THAT THIS,
TOO,



I
WAITED
FOR
AGES,
BUT
THE
CAR
NEVER
CAME.

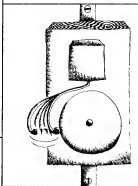


A SINGLE
WOODEN
BOARD
SLID UP TO
THE PLAT-
FORM.



THE
BELL
KEPT
RING-
ING.

DID IT
WANT ME
TO GET ONLY
UNSURE
WHAT TO
DO, I JUST
STOOD
THERE IN
CONFUSION.



AS I WAS
WONDERING
WHAT ON
EARTH IT
WAS, THE
DEPARTURE
BELL BEGAN
TO RING.

A black and white illustration of a young girl with short, dark, wavy hair, wearing a light-colored dress with a dark collar. She is sitting on a small, rectangular wooden board that is positioned on a curved, track-like surface. The background shows a wall with a grid of small, square openings.

THE BELL
STOPPED
RINGING.

FEELING
SUDDENLY
RUSHED,
I SAT
DOWN
ON THE
BOARD.

A black and white illustration of the same girl from the previous panel, looking down at a small, rectangular wooden board that is lying on a curved, track-like surface. The background shows a wall with a grid of small, square openings.

DEPARTURE
TIME.

THE
BOARD
BEGAN
TO SLIDE
DOWN
THE RAIL
WITH-
OUT A
SOUND.

A black and white illustration of the same girl from the previous panels, looking down at a small, rectangular wooden board that is lying on a curved, track-like surface. The background shows a wall with a grid of small, square openings.

I WAS STILL
UNSURE IF I
SHOULD BE DOING
THIS, BUT IF THE
DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION
HAD ALLOWED IT,
THEN SURELY I
COULDN'T BE
MAKING TOO MUCH
OF A MISTAKE.
WITH THAT IN MIND,
I LEFT MY FATE TO
THE RAIL AND THE
SMALL BOARD I
WAS RIDING ON.

I FELT A
PLEASANT
BREEZE ON
MY CHEEKS
AS I PICKED
UP SPEED.



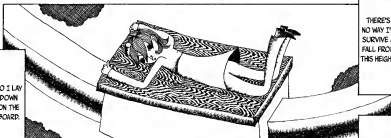
I TRIED
TO DODGE
THEN AND
ENDED UP
LOSING MY
BALANCE.



THERE
WERE
TREE
BRAN-
CHES
GROWING
ABOVE
THE RAIL.



LOOKING
DOWN,
I
REALIZED
WITH A
START JUST
HOW FAR
UP I WAS.



SO I LAY
DOWN
ON THE
BOARD.

THERE'S
NO WAY I'D
SURVIVE A
FALL FROM
THIS HEIGHT,



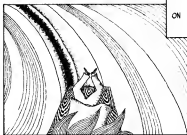
I FELT
LIKE I
WAS ON A
ROLLER
COASTER.



WITHOUT
THE ADDED
WIND RE-
SISTANCE, I
SUDDENLY
PICKED UP
SPEED.



AND
ON



ON

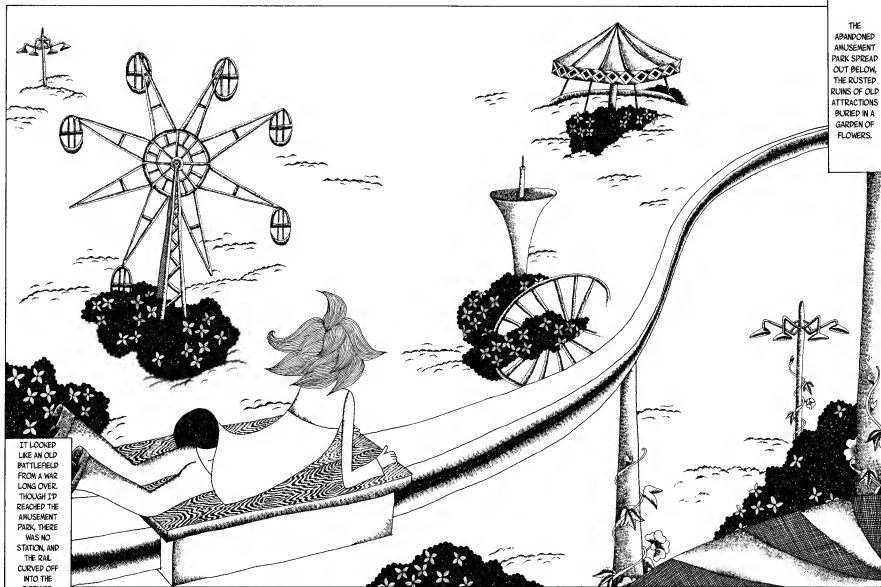


AND
ON I
RACED



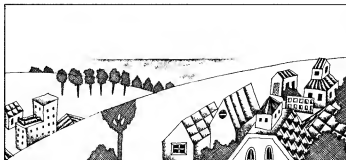
ODDLY
ENOUGH,
I FELT
NO FEAR,
ONLY A
CURIOUS
EXCITE-
MENT, AS
IF I WERE
FLYING
THROUGH
THE SKY.

THROUGH
MOUNTAINS
AND THE
VILLAGE.

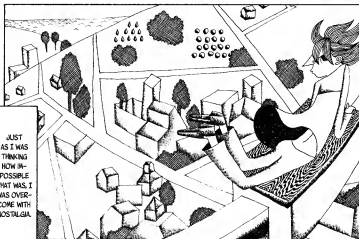


IT LOOKED
LIKE AN OLD
BATTLEFIELD
FROM A WAR
LONG OVER.
THOUGH I'D
REACHED THE
AMUSEMENT
PARK, THERE
WAS NO
STATION, AND
THE RAIL
CURVED OFF
INTO THE
DISTANCE.

THE
ABANDONED
AMUSEMENT
PARK SPREAD
OUT BELOW.
THE RUSTED
RUINS OF OLD
ATTRACTIONS
BURIED IN A
GARDEN OF
FLOWERS.

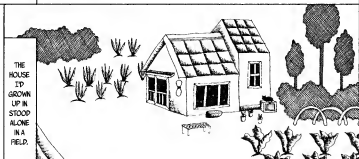


I COULD SEE THE OCEAN IN THE DISTANCE, WHICH WAS ODD AS I SHOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO.



I LOOKED AROUND AND SAW FAMILIAR SCENERY. THIS WAS MY HOMETOWN.

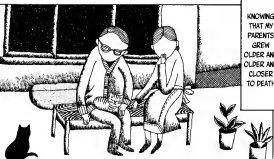
JUST AS I WAS THINKING HOW IMPOSSIBLE THAT WAS, I WAS OVERCOME WITH NOSTALGIA.



THE HOUSE I'D GROWN UP IN STOOD ALONE IN A FIELD.

OH, THERE'S MY PARENTS' HOUSE. NO DOUBT ABOUT IT.

IN THAT
HOUSE
OVER
THERE,
WHICH I
HADN'T
BEEN
BACK
TO IN
YEARS,
MADE
ME SO
SAD.



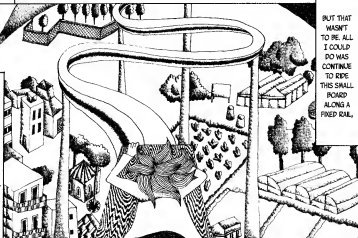
KNOWING
THAT MY
PARENTS
GREW
OLDER AND
OLDER AND
CLOSER
TO DEATH

I WANTED
TO SEE
THEM AND
FULFIL
AT LEAST
ONE OF
MY FILIAL
OBLIGA-
TIONS.

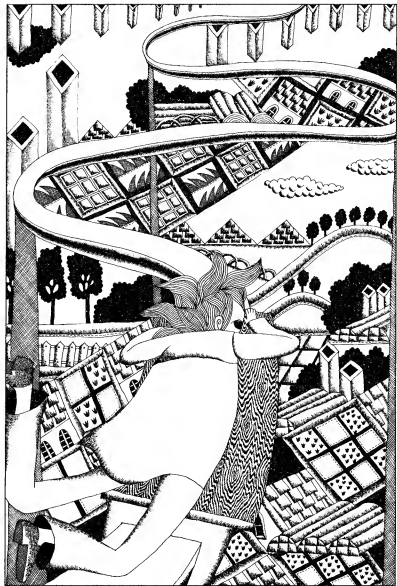


I WANTED
TO SEE
THEM SO
BAD.

WITH NO
AIM, NO
HOPE,
AND NO
UNDER-
STANDING.



BUT THAT
WASN'T
TO BE. ALL
I COULD
DO WAS
CONTINUE
TO RIDE
THIS SMALL
BOARD
ALONG A
FINED RAIL.





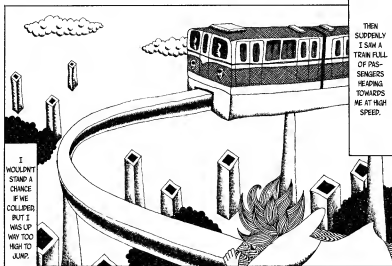
AND
ON



ON

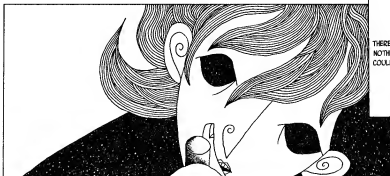


AND
ON I
RACED.

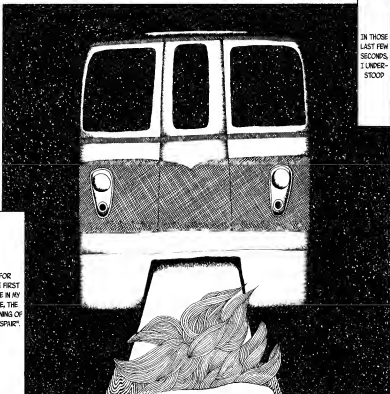


THEN
SUDDENLY
I SAW A
TRAIN FULL
OF PAS-
SENGERS
HEADING
TOWARDS
ME AT HIGH
SPEED.

I
WOULDN'T
STAND A
CHANCE
IF WE
COLLIDED,
BUT I
WAS UP
WAY TOO
HIGH TO
JUMP.



THERE WAS
NOTHING I
COULD DO.



IN THOSE
LAST FEW
SECONDS,
I UNDER-
STOOD

FOR
THE FIRST
TIME IN MY
LIFE, THE
MEANING OF
"DESPAIR".

THE END